

Captain Brabazon

BY B. M. CROKER

A Military Romance of South Africa

CHAPTER VIII.—(Continued.)

Closer and closer he came; his eyes bent on the ground, his hands behind his back, evidently lost in the deepest abstraction. He had approached to within a few paces of the summer house, Esme's heart was thumping as loudly as a big drum. It seemed to her own terrified ears, and that every other sound was swallowed up in its audible pulsation. Miles came nearer. He was within a yard of the summer house, and while they themselves were wrapped in darkness, he himself stood in the full view of the searching moonlight. They could note the accuracy of his tie, the rather withered little flower in his buttonhole, the parting of his hair, the gold links in his shirt cuffs. Now he stood on the very step. Then he turned slowly away and began to retreat his footstep.

"Oh, Ted, I feel so dreadfully frightened," murmured Esme. "I know I'm very foolish; for, after all, if he had come in, and I had told him who you were there would have been no harm done."

"Of course he has never heard of me—the family black sheep!"

"I believe Mrs. Brabazon told him you were dead!"

"Upon my word! She does not stick at a trifle."

"Oh, Ted! may not I tell him?"

"You shall the moment I get my commission—no sooner! Just have patience! You're always so impetuous, and in such a hurry about everything. I'm glad I've had a good stare at him. He's a good-looking fellow; very like that picture in the hall—the chap with the dish-cover and red sash, that was killed at Naseby!"

"I suppose you mean Rupert Brabazon, in the steel cuirass?"

"Yes, I'm glad to have seen him," nodding his head toward his now distant cousin, "but I doubt if the satisfaction would be mutual were he to see me."

In another moment Esme had said a hurried good night to her brother, darted round the corner of the summer house, and buried herself in a thick, dusky walk, which led straight to the friendly side door, through which she vanished.

Miles had been a prey to Mrs. Brabazon all the evening, her grand friends, her health, and her aims; bound to her side by strong social cords, he could not get away, but he had not been indifferent to the fact that Esme had stolen out of the room an hour ago. He had seen her running down the pleasure ground. Why should he not slip out, too, and meander by her side through the shady walks under the chestnut trees, instead of being pinned to the apron strings of a prosy, egotistical old woman? At last he was released, and had come out in hopes of meeting Esme. He was going away for a whole week, and to return and learn his fate at the bachelors' ball at Sandborough, which was to take place within a week. Something told him that the answer would be "Yes." But that photo he had seen on the moss at his feet that very morning kept protruding its ugly presence into his rosy dreams, and trying to imbue his mind with the poisonous taint of suspicion. Who could it have been? A man in uniform. "No one that Esme cared a straw about," he kept assuring himself, but still it was a man in uniform! His soul shrank from the plain truth, but was compelled to embrace it, all the same; Esme and his aunt had positively assured him that she had no other suitor but himself, and he believed them. He was not such an infidel as to doubt the solemn word of two ladies of his own family—one who bore the weight of years of uprightness, and the other who looked at him with eyes so true and so frank that, if her tongue had dared to utter a falsehood, they themselves would have betrayed her.

That meeting at the gate he had now put down to Miss Bell. Yes, he had been mistaken; Esme and Miss Bell were friends; she had been from home, and she was an unusually tall young woman, of almost masculine proportions. Yes, the apparition at the gate was peacefully laid. It is wonderful how young men in love will eagerly turn up and present excuses to themselves, and accept them, rather than be brought face to face with any little imperfection or flaw in their divinity. The photograph, Miles boldly told himself, was some public character. Girls carried all manner of queer things in their pockets, as he knew from his experience of his own sister. Esme had a craze for collecting the photos of royalties and celebrities. Why should not that suspicious picture be the Crown Prince of Germany, our own Prince of Wales, or that handsome man, the late Emperor of Russia? What a fool he was not to have asked her!

"He is an idiot about you," said Gussie, one afternoon, in a sudden burst of frankness, "and it is very plain that he has never been in love before; if he had he would know better than to show his hand. If he were to dissimble as they say in plays, or to bully you a little, it would be all the better for him, poor, deuced young man!" From which it will be seen that Augusta pitied Miles.

CHAPTER IX.

The great day of the bachelors' ball, at Sandborough, dawned at last; and, had you been on the platform at Byford, about 2 o'clock, you would have seen Mrs. Brabazon, Miss Jane, her two nieces, her own maid, Flack, and Nokes, all departing with a world of baggage. The two Miss Clippertons and their meek little mother filled up the compartment in which the Brabazons had taken their places. They were two young ladies, bound for the ball, whose slangy conversation nearly made Miss Jane's hair come out of curl. They wore their hair cropped close to their heads, very many hats, coats and collars, and were an entirely novel experience to the dear old person with the bobbing curls and worked black satin handbag. They were going to the same hotel—horror! their rooms were already taken.

"Ah! but you're going to dance this time, are you not? or the next? I'll get you lots of partners. Don't you recollect me?" in a tone slightly tinged with amazement. "We had the pleasure of meeting at Mrs. Top's."

"I do not remember the pleasure," returned Esme, with very emphatic significance, while Miles and Gussie exchanged glances of the keenest delight.

But even this snub had but little effect on Mr. Madden. He rose to the surface with cork-like buoyancy, and boldly demanded at least one dance, and his persistent entreaties were only cut short by Miles leading his partner away to take their places in one of the rapidly forming sets of lancers.

"I did not think you had it in you to snub anyone but me. Poor beggar, you were awfully rough on him," said Miles, as they came to anchor.

"Rough! You don't know him!" viciously. "At the Toppingtons' party he was quite—quite—"

"Interested?" suggested her companion, interrogatively.

"Yes, very much so; he actually took me for a school girl, and had the impudence to try to kiss me under the mistletoe," growing rather red, and speaking very fast.

"Confounded cat!" muttered Miles, looking over in the direction of Mr. Madden with a countenance now the reverse of indulgent or sympathetic.

"I suppose," said he, looking round, "that you are as great a stranger to all these people as I am, and you don't know anyone from Adam?"

"Not quite so bad as all that," responded Esme, with a smile; "some of the Maxton and Byford people are here. There, you see that nice-looking lady over there in the white lace shawl, she is Mr. Bell's sister, and between you and me that is Mrs. Bell's shawl!" lowering her voice to a whisper.

"Oh, and the girl near her in the swell dress?"

"That is a bride—and the old gentleman with the bald head, holding her fan, is her husband. She is his fourth wife."

"Oh, come now," in a tone of amused expostulation.

"She is!" indignantly.

"She is a courageous woman!" ejaculated Miles.

"How do you do, Miss Brabazon?" said a tall, plain girl in a pink dress, accosting Esme in the tea room, while Miles was procuring her a cup of coffee, addressing her with such warmth that she felt quite taken aback, for she had only met Miss Courtney Green at one or two garden parties, and then she had barely deigned to notice her save by a few tepid monosyllables and a fishlike clasp of the hand.

"Your first ball, I suppose? I hope you are enjoying it," eying Esme's dress, as she spoke, with an air of critical inspection, looking at it sideways and frontways, and evidently not merely appraising its value, but taking the pattern in her eyes, as she drew forth remarks about the band, the floor and the lights, in an abstract manner. "Is that your cousin Captain Brabazon?" she asked, having at length summed up Esme's ball costume; "the dark young man who was dancing with you?" lowering her voice mysteriously.

"Yes."

"The one who has come in for such heaps of money?" with still greater animation. "Very good looking, too. You must introduce him to me when he comes back. Here he is," eagerly. "Now," with a sharp nudge from a still sharper elbow.

"Miles," said Esme, in the innocence of her heart, "what ages you have been getting this coffee. Miss Courtney Green wishes you to be introduced to her."

Miss Courtney Green beamed and bowed with laudable presence of mind, but felt at the moment that she would have been almost justified in having Miss Brabazon's life. However, Miles July begged leave to inscribe his name on her rather empty program and led his partner once more back to the ball room.

(To be continued.)

PRECIOUS GEMS ARE GUARDED.

The Dealers Make Careful Note of All Changes in Their Ownership.

The dealer in precious stones keeps remarkable account of the valuable gems which come into this country. His business does not end when he succeeds in disposing of a precious stone or mounted piece at a good round figure. He can tell how many times it has changed hands since it reached these shores and usually he can tell every person in the country who owns anything in gems worth knowing about. This city is the great center of these dealers, as it is through this port that practically all gems enter.

The American woman buys the finest diamonds that can be had in the medium sizes, in which the purest stone comes. The mine from which the most beautiful stones are taken, at Jaegersfontein, in the Orange Free State, has been shut up, as a great reef encountered made it unprofitable to mine further. The next best diamonds come from Wesselson, about fifty-two miles from Kimberley, and that, too, is shut up on account of the war.

The finest large diamond which ever came into this country belonged to the Morgan collection. It weighed twenty-five carats and sold for about \$100,000. There was one diamond of 128 carats sold in this city and another Kimberley stone of seventy-six carats, but both were tinged with color and not nearly so valuable as the Morgan gem. Another single diamond sold in this city less than three years ago for \$42,000 and it is now owned by a Western woman. The American woman likes her diamonds, not by ones or twos, but by dozens and hundreds, and these are formed into tiaras, necklaces, corselets, corsages and hair bouquets and sprays, all arranged with or without other stones, and so that they can be easily detached and worn in separate pieces.

As the wealthy families of this country come into possession of a large number of diamonds, their taste turns toward colored stones. The ruby is pre-eminently the next in favor, and prices higher than those paid for diamonds are given for it. Two years ago a firm in this city sold a single ruby for \$25,000. Last year there came a demand for the emerald and a single beautiful stone in the autumn brought a dealer \$20,000.—New York Evening Post.



The Department of State has been advised of the penalties inflicted by the Chinese Government upon the persons alleged to be responsible for the recent murder of Mr. Brooks, the English missionary in the province of Chan-Tung. One man has been beheaded, one strangled, one sentenced to imprisonment for life and six for a term of ten years. The people of the village where the murder occurred are required to erect a monument on the spot with an inscription of warning against future attacks upon foreigners, and the Government has contributed 7,500 taels (about \$5,000) for a chapel near by. It is claimed that the persons executed for the murder of Missionary Brooks were not actually guilty of the crime, but were substitutes hired by the real assassins to suffer the penalties of death. This is frequently done in China, and as the leaders of the mob that murdered Missionary Brooks were men of importance in the community and have the sympathy of the officials, it is highly probable that they would be able to hire others to take their places.

In six months it was a whole half century since Galusha A. Grow was elected for his first time in Congress. As Mr. Grow sat in his seat listening to the debate on the Nicaraguan canal bill John Sherman came into the House and took an adjoining seat. Sherman entered Congress only a little later in the fifties, and has been everything but President. Then Representative Hitt of Illinois, with continuous service in diplomatic and congressional life spanning twenty-six years, moved up and joined his elders. The group illustrated marvelously what the former President Harrison calls "the possibilities of American citizenship."

The last quarter of the fiscal year ending March 31, 1900, was a record-breaker in the sale of postage stamps, the total for the three months reaching 1,080,151,515 stamps, valued at \$20,755,119. High-water mark up to this time was reached in the corresponding quarter ending March 31, 1898, when the total was 939,316,538 stamps, valued at \$18,611,635; but it will be seen that the last quarter exceeded that amount by 141,000,000 stamps and \$2,144,000. There is evidence that the present quarter may go ahead of the last.

For years the two beautiful doors at the entrance of the White House have been grained in imitation of black walnut, but in the spring cleaning this year Col. Bingham ordered the paint scraped off so as to have them done over. To the astonishment of everybody, it was discovered that the doors were of solid mahogany and of beautiful grain. Col. Bingham ordered them restored to their original native condition, and is now trying to find out who had them painted.

Secretary Gage will disburse about \$25,500,000 within the next three months for payments on the 2 per cent bonds. As fast as this money is paid out the Secretary will call upon the national banks to replace the money. The 2 per cent bonds are mostly held by the banks, which receive the money for them, and the return of government deposits to the treasury is designed to equalize the circulation throughout the country.

Last year we sent furniture to eighty-four different countries, the total valuation being \$3,571,375. The trade is growing rapidly, and American chairs and beds and tables can be found not only in every civilized country, but wherever the inhabitants are not entirely savage.

The oldest official of the Government of the United States is Roswell Bardsley of North Lansing, Tompkins County, New York, who has held a commission as postmaster at that place since the 28th of June, 1823, nearly seventy-two years.

An unusual spectacle was presented in the United States Supreme Court the other day when Congressman J. A. Barnham of Texas moved to admit his wife, Luda V., and his son, Ed C., to practice. They were admitted.

The Secretary of War has been officially informed that Capt. Carter, recently of the engineer corps, has been formally received at the Leavenworth prison and detailed for duty as a clerk at headquarters.

Speaker Henderson, who lost his left leg at the battle of Corinth, has a new artificial leg, with ankle and knee joints, and hopes to be able hereafter to dispense with his cane.

Notes of Current Events.

Kentucky district 4 unanimously re-nominated Davis Smith for Congress.

Chicago Board of Trade will try to shut off quotations from bucket shops.

Canadians fear other attempts will be made to blow up the locks on the Welland canal since three men have been convicted.

Over 1,000 banks have to be supplied with new currency plates, under the currency act of March 14. It will be four to six months before all can get these plates.

Miss Florence Leonard, Arlington, Ga., is suffering from nervous prostration at Niagara Falls, N. Y. She was left all night in the rain at the top of observation tower, 250 feet above earth. She failed to board the last car going down.

Julian Ralph, war correspondent, has returned to London. He will lose a leg as a result of a wound received in the Boer war.

Small gunboat Mindova recently fired across the bow of the transport Tarlac. The Tarlac mistook the gunboat for a Filipino vessel. She was halted and Maj. Whitley explained.

George W. Dart, who raised the Stars and Stripes over the Confederate capital at Columbia, S. C., at the end of Sherman's march to the sea, has just entered the Soldiers' Home of Iowa, at Marshalltown. His home was at Attica, N. Y.

WAR'S NEW ASPECT.

KRUGER'S FORCES ARE NOT YET CONQUERED.

South African Struggle Has Entered Upon a Stage Which Perplexes the British—Roberts Attacks Both, but Fails to Whip Him.

Interest in the Transvaal war has been greatly increased by the surprising turn events have taken since Lord Roberts entered Pretoria, remarks the Chicago News in reviewing the South African situation. The day after that event, which was generally accepted in Europe and in America as heralding the close of the struggle, Lord Roberts' line of communication was cut at Rooodeval and the militia battalion of the Derbyshire regiment guarding the railway was compelled after heavy loss to surrender. This wiping out of a battalion and the news that Lord Methuen was engaged in fierce fighting near Teyateyanan gave a new aspect to the war. It was perceived that the taking of Bloemfontein and Johannesburg and Pretoria were incidents, not crises, to the mobile forces of the Boers, and that in turn they were applying Lord Roberts' tactics to himself. Whether this rear attack and severing of the line of communication by destruction of the railway for twenty miles will have the result of compelling Lord Roberts to a retrograde movement remains to be seen. The later reports that Bloemfontein had been retaken by the Boers and that De Wet at the head of 13,000 men was marching against Johannesburg lack confirmation.

Gen. Kelly-Kenny has in part retrieved the disaster at Rooodeval by defeating the force of burghers who cut the British line of communications, but the fact remains that the war has entered upon a new and perplexing stage to the British. This new phase cannot properly be called guerrilla warfare any more than the movements of the American forces after the British capture of Washington in 1814 could be so called. In each case the fighting forces remained intact—the scene only of the conflict was changed.

In the case of the Transvaal it is evident that British occupation of Pretoria and Bloemfontein will be precarious until the main body of the Boers has been met and defeated in battle. That would, probably, not be a difficult thing for the British to accomplish with their enormously superior forces, but the tactics of the Boers are wisely to prevent such a pitched battle. By breaking up into comparatively small but effective detachments and striking swiftly as at Rooodeval the Boers may be able to prolong the war for some months yet. Their success in this direction is likely to inspire them with renewed hope and energy. It is this fact, rather than the actual loss of a battalion of men, that disturbs London and England to-day. Gen. Kelly-Kenny's success and the fact that Gen. Buller has at last pierced the Drakensberg mountains and entered the Orange Free State with the result of making the Boer position at Laing's Nek untenable, are the relieving features in the situation from the British point of view. Lord Roberts has fought a battle with Gen. Botha, at the end of which, though the British gained considerable ground, the Boers were not beaten. Roberts' line of communication was partially restored by a victory gained by Gens. Methuen and Kitchener over Gen. Dewet. The Boer camp was captured and the burghers, it is added, were scattered.

As matters now stand it looks as if the Boers might maintain the unequal struggle for a long time, and this consideration, in connection with the grave events occurring in China, has brought the English people to a more serious mood than it has known since the earlier and darker days of the war.

DECREASE IN WHEAT ACREAGE.

Government Statistician Reports on Crops Through the Country.

The monthly report of the statistician of the Department of Agriculture states that as a result of a special investigation relative to the winter wheat acreage, plowed up or cut for forage the department's estimate of the area remaining under cultivation has been further reduced by 1,676,000 acres, the area abandoned, in addition to that announced May 10, comprising 581,000 acres in Ohio, 79,000 acres in Michigan, 220,000 acres in Indiana, 348,000 acres in Illinois and 448,000 acres in California. This brings the area in winter wheat remaining under cultivation on June 1 down to 27,908,000 acres, a reduction from the area sown in the fall of 5,240,000 acres.

Notwithstanding this further reduction of acreage by the elimination of all land entirely abandoned, the condition of winter wheat declined during May 6.2 points, the condition on June 1 being 82.7, against 88.9 on May 1; 67.3 on June 1, 1899; 90.8 at the corresponding date in 1898, and a ten-year average of 80.7.

Preliminary reports on the spring wheat acreage indicate a reduction of about 567,000 acres, or 2.9 per cent. Minnesota, Wisconsin and Oregon report a reduction of 4 per cent, North Dakota and Nebraska of 5 per cent and Iowa of 6 per cent. In South Dakota and Washington there is an increase of 1 per cent. The average condition of spring wheat on June 1 was 87.3, as compared with 91.4 on June 1, 1899. Minnesota falls 10, North Dakota 17, South Dakota 11 and Wisconsin 9 points below their respective ten-year averages. On the spring wheat acreage average are exceeded in Nebraska, Iowa, Oregon and Washington by 15, 1, 4 and 9 points, respectively. The total reported acreage in oats exceeds the acreage harvested last year by 3.9 per cent. There is an increase of 16 per cent in Ohio, 28 per cent in Indiana, 9 per cent in New York, 3 per cent in Pennsylvania and Wisconsin and 1 per cent in Minnesota. The average condition of oats is 91.7.

The warning just sent out by the State Department against the swindling advertisements relating to pretended estates in England awaiting claimants is only a repetition of similar warnings, and it is not expected that it will put an end to these frauds. The English attorneys who are engaged in this business have apparently as complete an equipment as the regular dealers in green goods.

Maurice Finley, 5, Chicago, is dead from falling out of a fourth-story window. Elmer Link fell over a railing to the ground, eight feet below, and is dead.

Stumped the School Visitor.

A visitor at a Columbia, Mo., school the other day asked one of the lower grade class this question: "What is the axis of the earth?" "An imaginary line passing from one pole to the other, on which the earth revolves," proudly answered a pupil. "Yes," said the examiner, well pleased, "and could you hang a bonnet on it?" "Yes, sir." "Indeed! And what kind of a bonnet?" "An imaginary bonnet, sir." The visitor asked no more questions.

GIRLHOOD, WOMANHOOD AND MOTHERHOOD

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Mrs. E. C. Eversly, 505 Diamond street, Philadelphia, Pa., says: "I feel well, never felt better, thanks to your attention and Peruna. I will be glad to do all I can in the way of advancing the sale of your valuable medicine. I have tried at Peruna the best medicine I have tried at any time. Since I began taking Peruna we have never been without it."

Read what an elderly woman says—a woman who has passed through all the phases, crises and experiences of girlhood, womanhood and motherhood: "I really believe that every woman in the world ought to have Peruna on hand all the time; for, if she gets tired, Peruna refreshes her; if she gets nervous, it soothes her; if she is despondent, it invigorates. It is a panacea for all irregularities of her monthly periods."

"It is a constant friend to the expectant mother; a never-failing stand-by to the nursing mother, both for herself and for her child, and finally when the change of life comes on, no medicine on earth is of equal efficacy to the woman in this critical period. Surely Peruna is the critical period friend. This is no main-line battery, but is the simple, plain truth of the matter."

Miss Bertha E. Sargent writes: "I can scarcely find words to express my gratitude to you for all your kindness to me. We have used Peruna in our family for the past year and find it a wonderful medicine. It has robbed the grave of one victim, for I was in a critical condition when I wrote you before. Thanks to you, however, my health is fully restored and am better than I have been for five years. I cannot say too much in favor of your medicines."

"If you can use any words of mine to assist you in your work I will only be too glad. I wish every young lady in our town could read your book. There would be a great deal less sickness and puny women."

Send for a free copy of Dr. Hartman's book on catarrhs, diseases peculiar to women. Address The Peruna Medicine Co., Columbus, Ohio.

A Fund Easily Affected.

Housekeeper—That milk you left yesterday was perfectly horrid. It tasted of garlic.

Milkman—Milk is easily spoiled, mum. Had you been cookin' gar'ic?

"No, we hadn't."

"Been keepin' gar'ic in th' milk pans, maybe?"

"We never use it."

"Queer. Maybe some o' th' neighbors has been cookin' gar'ic."

"No, they haven't."

"Any visitors at your house yesterday?"

"Not even a caller, except my daughter's French teacher."

"H'm! Better drop French, mum."—New York Weekly.

Libby's

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Libby's Luncheons are indispensable helps for everyone who plans the meals or does the cooking during the Summer months. They are fire-savers and time-savers. The wholesomeness and purity of these products appeal to every lover of good things to eat.

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